

~~SECRET~~

50045 JUN 1976

Approved For Release 2004/10/07 : CIA-RDP78M02660R000200070049-7

There have been many recommendations and complaints concerning our present classification system, especially for compartmented systems.

Recognizing the urgent need to get intelligence to the essential users, as well as to protect those secrets whose compromise would jeopardize intelligence effectiveness, former DCI William Colby established a small ad hoc group of senior intelligence officers to develop policy guidelines to serve as a basis for designing a system that would meet today's needs. This group is chaired by the Deputy Director for Intelligence, CIA, and is made up of senior officials from Department of State/INR, DIA, NSA and the Intelligence Community Staff.

The ad hoc group is working to develop new principles and guidelines for the classification and control of intelligence which will provide:

-- A broader access to intelligence by applying the lowest appropriate classification and minimum dissemination controls.

-- Extra protection to only those aspects of intelligence sources and methods that truly affect their viability.

Approved For Release 2004/10/07 : CIA-RDP78M02660R000200070049-7

~~SECRET~~

The ad hoc group has identified the basic issues involved and has developed some tentative principles and guidelines for the classification and control of intelligence. At a meeting of the group, members who represented intelligence collectors were requested to prepare a list of those actions which their agencies can take on their own authorities to increase customer access to information now restricted by codewords or dissemination controls. This should ease the problem somewhat.

One fundamental action requires a decision by the President. According to existing Presidential instructions, even the fact that the US conducts satellite reconnaissance is classified Secret. Other aspects of the reconnaissance program are classified even higher and are compartmented. This classification sets a floor of Secret on all photographs and other products attributed to the satellite reconnaissance program.

On my instructions, a draft memorandum for my signature addressed to the President is now being circulated within the Intelligence Community. This memorandum recommends that the President authorize the Director of Central Intelligence to declassify the fact of the existence of the US satellite reconnaissance program and to make other adjustments in the classification and handling of the products of the program. All such changes would be in accordance with the DCI's statutory responsibility to protect intelligence sources and methods for unauthorized disclosure and in accordance with his responsibility under Executive Order 11905--"to ensure that appropriate programs are developed which properly protect intelligence sources, methods and

~~SECRET~~

analytical procedures."

Above all, there is a fundamental need for secrecy legislation, for without this legislation I do not foresee much real change in present compartmentation philosophy.